

November 22, 1999

John Berry, Assistant Secretary
Department of Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240
Fax: (202) 219-1220

Dear Secretary Berry,

Aloha! Welcome to Hawaii for this public forum to listen to our concerns regarding P.L. 103-150, the Apology Resolution.

I write this as a Hawaiian who has spent half of his 74 years being an activist for Hawaiian concerns.

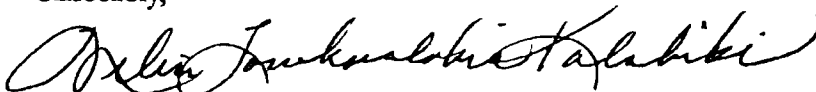
My remarks are given on behalf of my ohana (family) on both sides of my genealogy, including those who have signed the Petition of 1897, the petition that stopped Congress from passing the Treaty of Annexation. Nevertheless, the result was the taking of Hawaii by the United States based on a resolution, which as we all know was an illegal act; a resolution does not have the impact of a treaty.

I want to thank Senator Akaka for his foresight and hard work in bringing about the Apology Resolution. I do understand that it is the first step towards making right the damaging actions here of 1893 and 1897.

As the indigenous peoples of Hawaii, we have the right to self-determination. This was a kingdom with foreign treaties to many countries around the world. This was a recognized and legitimate government. A government that was ended illegally by a foreign nation.

I do not think any nation should tell Hawaiians what is best for them. That is our responsibility. It is for us to decide. It is for the United States to provide the means to make it happen. We have waited 106 years.

Sincerely,



Melvin Lonokaiolohia Kalahiki

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Received 12-11-99
EW Center

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**Reconciliation Hearing
December 11, 1999**

**John Berry, Assistant Secretary of the Interior
Mark Van Norman, Deputy Director- Office of Tribal Justice**

Aloha ka kou,

I want to thank you for your willingness to serve on this Commission assigned by the President and for coming here to listen to our concerns of the many years of hardship within our Hawaiian community.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the President for signing the Public Law 103-150 on November 23, 1993. I want to thank our Congressional Delegates for the hard work that went in to moving this Bill through Congress.

On December 28, 1993, a ceremony was held at our historic Kawaiaha'o Church sponsored by the Council of Hawaiian Organizations. This special service was attended by Senator Daniel Akaka, the guest speaker. Our being there was to give thanks to God for this Apology Resolution. After the ceremony this Apology document was carried by the children of Hawaii to the State Archives for future generations.

The history of the illegality of the overthrow and the annexation was not taught in our schools. Those of my generation, and my father's generation, did not have the full knowledge of these events. It wasn't until I reached my 20's that I became aware of what had passed. Today I am 74 years old and I stand here representing my ohana (family) and all of those that voted for me to represent them in the Aha Hawai'i 'O'iwi Convention.

I have been involved in this movement for justice from the time I became aware of the injustices that were done to the Kingdom of Hawaii. I have spent my life as a Hawaiian activist. I know that the majority of Hawaiians want our nation back. One has only to read our history to become aware of the indignities imposed upon our Queen, a prisoner in her own palace, as well as the indignities imposed on Hawaiians, who were denied their ancient language and the ancient heritage... their culture. The powers that be knew full well that when you take away the language you take away the culture, and all the dignity that goes with it.

I have so many questions to ask, but let me ask one. Hawai'i was not taken by treaty, it was taken by resolution. Did the sovereignty of Hawai'i pass to the United States on August 12, 1898 during the ceremony of annexation at 'Iolani Palace with the exchange of documents? According to the laws of the United States, as well as international law, it did not. These are the questions that burn within the native Hawaiians. I know that there are many more burning questions. The United States has the status of being the world's super-power. This is called a "reconciliation" hearing but this is reconciliation on your terms. What we want is for you to reconcile on our terms because we were a valid nation with treaties with foreign powers. Nothing will come to a resolution unless that resolution comes from the people of Hawai'i..

We stand here today, each taking our turn. We speak not only for ourselves but for those who cannot be here today. We speak for our ancestors who signed the Anti-Annexation Petition of 1898. A petition that stopped the Treaty of Annexation, it was then that the United States resorted to the illegal maneuver of a joint resolution. Last question: **Can a United States resolution, in 1898, go past the borders of California and take a foreign country?**

pau

Melvin Lonokaiolohia Kalahiki
Delegate-Aha Hawai'i 'O'iwi
President-Council of Hawaiian Organizations
Council of Chiefs-Pu'ukohola Heiau (King Kamehameha's Temple of State)